

# Emazweni! Iyo bakhala ngayo - Iyo bakhala ngayo - i Freedom charter

By Ben Sediane



Many years ago, this song, *Emazweni! Iyo bakhala ngayo! Iyo bakhala ngayo - I Freedom Charter*, was sung across the breadth and length of the country; and even far beyond the borders of our country.

The melodies of this song always resonates through the veins, and arouses the anxiety that indeed, the struggle still continue up until the people of South Africa, led by the **united ANC** fully achieved what the Freedom Charter promised them when the people declared that ***“These Freedoms, we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, Until we have won our liberty”***.

The song is an expression of how the people of our country and beyond cherish the Freedom Charter. The ideation behind the Freedom Charter firstly emerged during the ANC Cape Province conference held at Cradock in 1953. In his Presidential address, Professor Z K Matthews, posited the following ... ***“I wonder whether the time has not come for the African National Congress to consider the question of convening a national convention, a congress of the people, representing all the people of this country irrespective of race or colour, to draw up a Freedom Charter for the democratic South Africa of the future”***.

Out of that statement, the Freedom Charter was born; which later became the beacon of hope to all freedom loving South Africans. It has to be a

common cause that this beacon of hope to so many people needed to be embraced in our daily struggles as the torch bearer.

This torch bearer which was conceptualised in the conference which one can term a seminal moment in the history of our country and the ANC, require men and women of character to ensure that those clauses as espoused in it (Freedom Charter) are fulfilled.



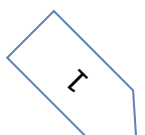
This year marks the 67 and 110 anniversaries of the Freedom Charter and ANC respectively. These two apex anniversaries are celebrated during the year which was declared ***“The Year of Unity and Renewal to Defend and Advance South Africa’s Democratic Gains”*** by the ANC.

Prettifying these two anniversaries, the NEC in earnest saw the need to infuse ***renewal*** in its 2022 January 8 statement and move further by calling us to ***defend and advance South Africa’s democratic gains***.

The question will be ***how are these two anniversaries link to the Freedom Charter?*** As the ANC celebrate its 110 anniversary, having championed the Freedom Charter from its inception; this year, as we celebrate the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Freedom Charter, we are called upon to defend and advance the democratic gains, which were achieved by the ANC led government, and again called to ***renew the ANC***.

Thus, for us to still continue to strive for the achievement of the Freedom Charter’s declaration, ***“These Freedoms, we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty”***, we are called to ***renew the ANC***.

Notably, this dialectical link permeate upon us as we prepare for the 55<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the ANC, that to continue defending our democratic gains, the forthcoming National Conference need to ***renew***



***the ANC*** for us to heed the call made 67 years ago when South Africans who gathered in Kliptown declared to the world to know that ***“These Freedoms, we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty”.***

Invariably as we approach the conferences of the ANC, because of their magnitude and importance we are pre occupied mainly by the elections (acknowledging that elections are part of the conference); let’s circumvent to be largely caught up in the election quandary.

The January 8 statement calls on us to ***renew the ANC and defend our democratic gains***. Our mission to renew the ANC has to inhabit the centre stage of the conference. Thus, the conduit for the ANC to live the dreams of our revolutionary ancestors, who 67 years ago, gathered in Kliptown to upset the brutal and heinous tide of apartheid government for the sake of our country and the people.

At this hour we can’t afford to change the novel script of the Freedom Charter; rather we have to add our footprints to it in order for the coming generation to jealously guard against its distractors. Furthermore, let’s use our energy to make the forthcoming 55<sup>th</sup> National conference a historic gathering which will, at its conclusion, have answered and set a long lasting prognosis for the people of South Africa, and leave up to the spirit and letter of this year January 8 statement’s clarion call.

Let us all, who have swelled the ranks of this giant movement, unite with single purpose and desire as we work towards the 55<sup>th</sup> National conference of the ANC in December 2022. As we do that, let’s sing together the song ***Emazweni! Iyo bakhala ngayo - I Freedom charter***, this will revive our revolutionary spirit on our quest to the ***renewal and rebuilding of the ANC***.

**MATLA!**

